

American

NEWS & VIEWS

A Daily Newsletter from Public Affairs, American Embassy

July 29, 2011

Secretary Clinton Praises Innovations to Protect Mothers, Children at Birth	1
Note on U.S. Meetings in New York with North Korea Officials	1
U.S., India Partner to Advance Scientific Research, Development	2
New Zealand, United States Discuss Global Trade Issues.....	2

Secretary Clinton Praises Innovations to Protect Mothers, Children at Birth

By MacKenzie C. Babb | Staff Writer

Washington – Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton is praising innovators from around the globe for their work to protect the health and lives of mothers and children at birth, particularly in rural areas of the developing world.

She spoke to the Saving Lives at Birth Development Exchange at the State Department July 28, where innovators gathered from across the world with proposals for new technologies, new service-delivery models and new ways to stimulate demand for health care services at the time of birth.

“A woman, still today in 2011, dies in childbirth every two minutes. In 2009, according to the World Health Organization, 2.6 million children were stillborn. One million newborns die every year in the two days after birth, and we just cannot watch that happening without saying: How can we prevent these deaths?” Clinton said. To change this equation, the secretary said, affordable, scalable and sustainable solutions are needed to help women and children in hard-to-reach places.

A partnership named “Saving Lives at Birth: A Grand Challenge for Development” issued a call for innovations in March to address the causes of mother and newborn deaths. The partnership brings together efforts from the U.S. government, international partners and nongovernmental organizations, with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) taking a leading role.

According to a July 28 USAID statement, the partnership received more than 600 submissions from around the world and selected 77 finalists, who travelled to Washington July 26–28 “to compete in the final stage of the competition, display their ideas to the public in an open marketplace and establish connections with a community of innovators dedicated to a single cause: ensuring every mother delivers safely and every newborn has a healthy start to life.”

Clinton said the submissions address the “persistent” and “heartbreaking” challenges of maternal and child health, and that many focus on the most critical window for maternal and child health: from the onset of labor to 48 hours after childbirth. The secretary said many also address the need for pregnant women to have access to adequate nutrition and prenatal care, life-saving medicines and skilled health workers during labor.

She encouraged each of the 600 entrants from all over the world, the 77 finalists and the eventual winners to

continue working on innovations, calling their efforts “the kind of creative approach toward enhancing development that I think is in the best interests of the people whom we are hoping to serve.”

USAID Administrator Rajiv Shah delivered a similar message at the program’s launch in March.

“To make advances in maternal and newborn health, our real opportunity lies in harnessing the power of innovation – scientific, technological and behavioral – to build a continuum of invention from bench to bush,” he said. Innovations should allow the program to expand its reach “to women who will likely never set foot inside a hospital.”

The challenge to innovate was issued using the collective resources of USAID, the government of Norway, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Grand Challenges Canada and the World Bank. According to USAID, the partners expect to provide about \$14 million for the grant program’s first round of funding, and at least \$50 million during the next five years.

Note on U.S. Meetings in New York with North Korea Officials

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Office of the Spokesperson
July 28, 2011
2011/1252

MEDIA NOTE

Meetings with the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK)

Special Representative for North Korea Policy Stephen Bosworth and a U.S. interagency delegation met today with First Vice Foreign Minister Kim Kye-Gwan and the DPRK delegation at the United States Mission to the United Nations in New York. Today’s discussions have been serious and business-like. We look forward to continuing our meetings tomorrow.

As the Secretary has said, this is an exploratory meeting to determine if North Korea is prepared to fulfill its commitments under the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks and its international obligations, as well as to take concrete and irreversible steps toward denuclearization.

We continue to coordinate closely with the Republic of Korea and our other partners.

U.S., India Partner to Advance Scientific Research, Development

Washington — A new collaborative agreement “is the latest step in the deepening cooperation between the U.S. and India on a range of clean energy and scientific fronts,” U.S. Deputy Secretary of Energy Daniel Poneman said July 25.

The U.S. Department of Energy and the Indian Department of Atomic Energy are working together to help advance discovery in the field of accelerator and particle detector research.

Poneman and Srikumar Banerjee, chairman of the Indian Atomic Energy Commission, signed the agreement on the sidelines of Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton’s visit to India for the second round of the U.S.-India Strategic Dialogue in New Delhi July 19.

“Working together, we will be able to further our collective understanding of accelerators and high-energy particles, pursue new technologies and scientific discoveries, and advance our shared clean energy goals,” Poneman said.

Laboratories use accelerators and particle detectors to detect, track and identify high-energy particles, such as those produced by nuclear decay or cosmic radiation. Several industries use accelerators that produce beams of charged particles. These industries include medical diagnosis and treatment, electronics, and security and defense.

Speaking at the Anna Centenary Library in Chennai, India, July 20, Clinton said India’s advancements in science and technology and its vibrant example of democracy will help to enrich human lives around the world.

A high-priority goal of the U.S.-India collaboration is to look at new technologies to produce clean, safe and reliable energy to help India develop energy independence and support a population of 1.3 billion people.

The agreement provides the U.S. and Indian energy agencies a legal framework to build on existing collaborations and create new projects in high-energy physics and nuclear physics. Through their collaborative research, scientists hope to gain a better understanding of the matter and energy that form the universe.

The pact also builds on a long history of successful scientific collaborations between the United States and India. Past research and development partnerships have resulted in important scientific advances, including the

discovery of a fundamental constituent of matter, which scientists believe formed an instant after the universe began and has a temperature of around 4 trillion degrees Celsius, the hottest temperature ever reached in a laboratory.

This new agreement is part of a planned long-term collaborative effort on climate research that DOE began with India’s science-related agencies early in 2011. Other shared efforts include the third annual Women in Science workshop, which the United States and India plan to co-host in September.

New Zealand, United States Discuss Global Trade Issues

Washington — Officials from the United States and New Zealand discussed job-supporting trade initiatives during a recent meeting in Washington, according to the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR).

USTR Ron Kirk met with New Zealand Prime Minister John Key July 22 to discuss trade issues, including the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, and the Doha Development Agenda of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

In particular, Kirk and Key reviewed progress in the TPP negotiations following the seventh round of talks held June 15-24 in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

The TPP, created in 2006 by Singapore, New Zealand and Chile, aims to promote regionwide economic cooperation. Officials from the eight current TPP member economies — Australia, Brunei, Chile, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, Vietnam and the United States — aim to revise and extend the TPP to reflect 21st-century trade standards, which include ensuring worker rights and protecting the environment.

In a speech to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce July 22, Key said, “TPP represents something genuinely new and important. It will establish a framework that will work for countries as diverse as Vietnam, New Zealand and the U.S.”

Kirk and Key also discussed the close working relationship between the United States and New Zealand in APEC and agreed to continue to work closely on issues of mutual importance throughout APEC negotiations.

In remarks with Key following their meeting, Kirk cited appreciation for New Zealand’s strong support for the APEC forum. The United States and New Zealand share as a priority that APEC leaders reach an agreement by the meeting in November, according to USTR.

Kirk also stressed the need for a successful completion of the long-running Doha round of world trade talks. A successful conclusion of those talks is one of the economic goals of the Obama administration.

The Doha Development Agenda, launched in 2001, seeks to liberalize trade and enhance market access for agricultural products, manufactured goods and services. Negotiations over the global free-trade agreement, which strives to alleviate poverty and boost the international economy, stalled in 2006 because of divisions among the major trading nations.

In connection with the Doha talks, Kirk and Key discussed the challenges facing negotiators and the importance of exploring options for productive steps.

The USTR is responsible for developing and coordinating U.S. international trade and overseeing trade negotiations with other countries. The agency works under the premise that trade expansion is critical to fueling economic growth, supporting good jobs, encouraging investment, raising living standards and creating affordable goods and services worldwide.

In 2010, New Zealand was the United States' 56th-largest supplier of goods, with exports to United States valued at \$2.8 billion. New Zealand was the United States' 51st-largest goods export market in 2010, with those goods valued at \$2.8 billion, according to USTR.

(This is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov>)